7/28/71

Dear Howard,

Your mailing of 27 came this a.m. I didn't look at clips, skimmed letters, because I was trying to rite on a much-interrupted day. In fact, each day begins with a major interruption, what for me is a long, brisk walk up the mountain. Dogs forced me to cut back on the distance, while I'm attempting to compensate for with speed, hence exertion. But it is a necessary and not really unwelcome interruption.

Dick's letter: my answer to the one to you should suffice.

Threat: if you've seen so little of the potential, I think you should forget. Unless you want the copy, give Dick enough time to ask and then return. I may enlist other aid. To me and virtually all others I've consulted, there is a quite explicit threats vs McG. Tow questions are first, whether it is intended seriously (and if so, whether an effort will be made to implement), and I think the chances are against it; and what else is hidden by a well-trained if sick mind.

To agree with your 7/26 would persuade me to quit. You are saying we are wasting our time. If nothing else, try and recall the fable of Bruce. Or, consider the alternative, abdication.

Little-Brown, unless change in ownership weighs against, you might not be under as big a handicap as you think. Their senior editor wanted to do WW but there was a negative policy decision.

Your comment on the writing is, as you say, not unique. What is lacking is a solution. It is no problem to consider academic problems in a vacuum, but that does not begin to approach the limited alternatives. I also find that where people offer to edit, they a) do little; b) do nothing; c) take too long. It has been two months since I sent the completed chapters of AO to the west coast and they are not back. So, all that jazz is good prof, but make a few meaningful suggestions. Like telling me who will write the perhaps half-dozen books I've got researched, if only for a historical record, if I do not do them. And how much time I have. And how much longer I can live this way. And what difference it made when two of my books were reprinted, but not a single word was changed. Or whether the professional editing the last one got really was an improvement. It is easy to sit back, take things out of context, and pontificate a bit, perhaps speaking nothing but truth. But what I need is a suggestion about the feasible, not the academic.

One of the paradoxes is that with the rather large fanmail I've had, only the critics or the buffs claim I am not understood. There is too much terseness sometimes, which is one way of packing more in. And there without doubt are other flaws. But people do not write books on this subject to entertain, nor are they bought for fun. To date what I'd had to consider completed is retyped rough drafts. I wish I could see an alternative.

Your 22: those are not the only picture to mysteriously disappear. We should be getting used to it. You should do a specific memo on it, giving it what dist. you think. I suggest strongly limited.

Is it reasonable to address the possibility of Nixon's have trouble, like a few potshots, on the basic of reason as you see things and not as those who just might be tempted might? There was conjecture from the smacking of the first pingpong ball. I'll read the artcile on the "leak" when I can. You are quite right on Nixon as a copier. Add also an improviser. I've recently held forth at great length on this to a distant friend of my age.

Notes citing pages PP very helpful. By the time I will be able to resume that writing, much of this will be out of mind. I'll put them in a copy or the working file I've started.

Pix.: I can't answer questions. My subsequent letter should have clarified what may have been no more than a misidentification by MS. But the shape of the edges makes it seem not like a collar , and the surplus material also seems to make that unlikely. Natch, I've heard nothing since writing.

Hastily,